REMARKS

Claims 3-11 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 3-11 were rejected. With this Amendment, claim 3 was amended and claim 5 was cancelled. Accordingly, claims 3-4 and 6-11 are at issue in the above-identified application.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Obviousness Rejection of Claims

Claims 3-5 and 7-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Gingerich et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,218,240). Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Gingerich et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,218,240) in view of *Gingerich et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 4,381,937). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Amended claim 3 recites A method of manufacturing high purity cobalt comprising the steps of: converting divalent copper ions as impurities contained in an aqueous solution of cobalt chloride to monovalent copper ions, wherein the converting step comprises the steps of: injecting an inert gas into the aqueous solution of cobalt chloride, contacting the aqueous solution of cobalt chloride with cobalt, adjusting a concentration of hydrochloric acid in a range of 0.1 $kmol/m^3$ to 3 $kmol/m^3$, and separating the monovalent copper ions from the aqueous solution of cobalt chloride by using anion exchange resins. *Gingerich et al.* describes a method for producing cobaltic hexammine compounds and cobalt metal powder. *Gingerich et al.* further states that it would be desirable to oxidize cobalt ions present in a divalent state in the starting solution to a trivalent state. Furthermore, *Gingerich et al.* states that conventional oxidation methods may be utilized. For example, the solution containing cobalt ions and ammonia may be contacted with a gas containing oxygen for a sufficient period of time to substantially convert cobalt ions to a trivalent state. However, *Gingerich et al.* fails to teach or disclose a method of

manufacturing a high purity cobalt comprising converting *divalent* copper ions as impurities contained in an aqueous solution of cobalt chloride to *monovalent* copper ions. *Gingerich et al.* is in fact silent as regards to the valents of any copper ions found within any cobalt mentioned within *Gingerich et al.* and *Gingerich et al.* never discloses or discusses converting divalent copper ions to monovalent copper ions. Furthermore, *Gingerich et al.* is silent with regards to injecting an inert gas into an aqueous solution of cobalt chloride. While *Gingerich et al.* discusses how it would be desirable to oxidize cobalt ions by contacting the cobalt ions with a gas containing oxygen, claim 1 specifically recites injecting an inert gas into an aqueous solution of cobalt chloride, which is intended to remove any oxygen dissolved in the aqueous solution of cobalt chloride. As a result, Applicants maintain that none of the cited references, either alone or in combination, teach or anticipate the recited invention. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____

David Rozenblat
Registration No. 47,044
SONNENSCHEIN NATH & ROSENTHAL LLP
P.O. Box 061080
Wacker Drive Station, Sears Tower
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1080
(312) 876-8000